(v) Thrust has been given to reduce manpower through Voluntary Retirement Scheme as well as re-deployment of manpower in a planned manner by imparting training as well as upgradation of skill of the existing workers.

(vi) Steps are also being taken to improve the production by opening of new mines either through lease finance or by joint venture.

Foreign Participation in Coal Sector

4045. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that it has been decided to re-open coal mining cent per cent to the private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether foreign participation will be permitted in the coal sector;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of the answer to part (a) of the question.

(c) to (e) Foreign companies are not permitted to do coal mining in the country. However, foreign investment in Indian companies generating power, producing cement and iron & steel, which are engaged in coal mining for captive consumption, is permitted.

Hindi Typewriters in the Ministry

†4046. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI : Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) the names of offices under his ministry/department where not a single Hindi typewriter is available until now;

(b) the reasons for not putting demands for Hindi typewriters in these offices until now; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) what action has been taken to ensure that the targets fixed in the annual Hindi programme with regard to the purchase of Hindi typewriters by the Department of Official Language are implemented properly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) In so far as Department of Mines and Department of Coal are concerned Devnagri typewriters are available in all the subordinate offices/undertakings. There is not even a single office under these Departments where Devnagri typewriter is not available.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Department of Official Language prepares an annual programme every year for implementation of Official Language Policy of the Union in which targets are fixed for implementation of Official Language including purchase of Devnagri typewriters. A copy of the annual programme issued by the Department of Official Language is sent to all the subordinate offices/undertakings for compliance. Besides these offices are also inspected from time to time with a view to review the progress of Hindi and to ensure the achievement of the targets fixed in the annual programme.

Taping the Conventional Energy Sources

4047. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State are taking any initiative to tap the conventional energy sources;

(b) if so, which States have made maximum effort in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to attract more investment in this area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) Yes, Sir. The States have been implementing a wide range of programmes/schemes such as biogas, improved chulha, integrated rural energy programme, special area demonstration programme, small hydro power, biomass gasifier, wind power, solar power, biomass/co-generation power, solar photovoltaics, solar water heating systems and solar cookers, SPV pumps and windmills and urban and industrial waste etc. throughout the country for promotion and utilization of Non-conventional Energy.